DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 278 046 CS 210 288

AUTHOR Valeri-Gold, Maria
TITLE Bridging the Generations: Helping Students Understand the Elderly (K-7). Choosing and Using Children's Books.
INSTITUTION National Council of Teachers of English, Urbana, Ill.
PUB DATE Dec 85
NOTE 5p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131) -- Journal Articles (080)
JOURNAL CIT Livewire; v2 n3 p10-13 Dec 1985

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Age Differences; *Aging Education; Annotated Bibliographies; *Childrens Literature; *Class Activities; Elementary Education; *Generation Gap; *Older Adults

ABSTRACT

To help students identify with and appreciate the elderly, this annotated bibliography lists 24 books for kindergarten through seventh grade that involve children and young people in close relationships with older people. Annotations, divided according to primary level or upper elementary level, include publisher and date of publication, as well as title, author, and a description of the book. A list of simple activities is provided to supplement the reading and further students' understanding of some of the special problems faced by older people. (JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED278046

Bridging the Generations: Helping Students Understand the Elderly (K-7). Choosing and Using Children's Books

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

NCTE

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

National Council of Teachers of English

CS 210 288

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Choosing and Using Children's Books

Bridging the Generations: Helping Students Understand the Elderly (K–7)

Books can be valuable tools in fostering understanding. As you search for ways to help students identify with and appreciate the elderly, you may find the following annotated bibliography useful.

All of the books listed here present children and young people in close relationships with older people. Despite the difficult lessons they must learn, such as how to deal with the death of a grandfather or how to help a grandmother regain her independence, the characters in these stories openly celebrate their friendships with the older people they know. To help your students do the same, supplement the reading of one or more of these books with simple activities such as those appearing on page 12. When expanded and tailored to the needs of your students, the activities should work well in conjunction with any of the books read and will further your students' understanding of some of the special problems that older people face.

Grades K–3

Nonna by Jennifer Bartoli (Harvey House, 1975). A garden and a cookie recipe remind a young boy of his grandmother, Nonna.

Nana Upstairs and Nana Downstairs by Tomi de Paola (Penguin Books, 1978). A small boy enjoys his relationship with his grandmother and his great-grandmother, but he learns to face their inevitable deaths.

Now One Foot, Now the Other by Tomi de Paola (Putnam, 1981). After his grandfather suffers a massive stroke, Bobby helps his grandfather learn to talk and walk again by using the saying "Now one foot, now the other."

Nana by Lyn Littlefield Hoopes (Harper and Row, 1982). Although her grandmother has died, a young girl still sees this important woman in all things living and growing around her.

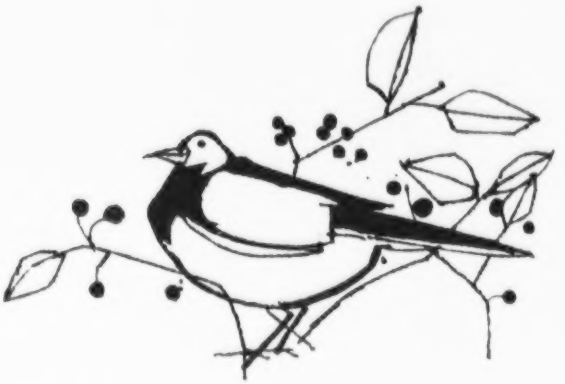
My Grandpa Retired Today by Elaine Knox-Wagner; edited by Kathleen Tucker (Albert Whitman, 1982). Margery comes to a farewell party at the barbershop where her grandfather has worked for years. Sensing her grandpa's depression, she cheers him up by looking to the future when they'll have time to do all the things that he had been too busy to do before.

Through Grandpa's Eyes by Patricia MacLachlan (Harper and Row, 1980). Although John's grandpa is blind, a special relationship is inspired when he discovers the preciousness of life and the beauty of nature through his grandfather's keenly developed senses.

I Love My Grandma by Steven Palay (Raintree, 1977). An unnamed young girl describes the moments that she and her grandmother share together when her parents are out during the day.

Allison's Grandfather by Linda Peavy (Scribner, 1981). Erica thinks about the death of her friend Allison's grandfather and remembers the weekends they spent on his ranch together before he died.

When Grandpa Died by Margaret Stevens (Children's Press, 1979). A young girl tries to come to terms with the death of her grandfather.



Grades 3–7

Where Pigeons Go to Die by R. Wright Campbell (Rawson Associates, 1978). Hugh's grandfather introduces Hugh to his passion, racing pigeons, and this experience helps Hugh grow and accept his grandfather's death resulting from a stroke.

Queen of Hearts by Vera and Bill Cleaver (J.P. Lippincott, 1978). Twelve-year-old Wilma and her grandmother learn to respect each other as Wilma cajoles Granny into becoming more independent.

The Amazing Miss Laura by Hila Crayder Colman (William Morrow, 1976). During the summer when she takes care of Miss Laura, the eccentric widow of a famous painter, seventeen-year-old Josie gains a greater respect for her own grandfather and growing old.

The Faraway Island by Barbara Corcoran (Atheneum, 1977). Fourteen-year-old Lynn spends a year with her grandmother on Nantucket Island. She overcomes her shyness and fear of school through her grandmother's uncritical acceptance, which makes her less afraid of her own awkwardness.

Hey, That's My Soul You're Stomping On by Barbara Corcoran (Atheneum, 1978). While her parents discuss a possible divorce, sixteen-year-old Rachel spends the summer with her grandparents and realizes that everyone has problems, many of them more serious than hers.

So Long, Grandpa by Elfie Donnelly; edited and translated by A. Bell (Crown Publishers, 1981). Ten-year-old Michael describes his close relationship with his seventy-nine-year-old grandfather and how he copes with his grandfather's death from cancer.

Oma by Peter Hartling; edited and translated by A. Bell (Harper and Row, 1977). Five-year-old Kalle is orphaned by a car accident and goes to live with Oma, his sixty-five-year-old, loving, outspoken grandmother in Munich. She teaches him independence and helps him cope with her inevitable death and his future.

Our Snowman Had Olive Eyes by Charlotte Herman (E. P. Dutton, 1983). When ten-year-old Sheila's grandmother, Bobbie, decides to leave Sheila and live with her son, Sheila considers running off too, but she learns to accept the fact that her grandmother has to live her own life.

If You Love Me, Let Me Go by Norma Johnston (Atheneum, 1978). Twelve-year-old Allison and her family strain to care for Gran, who has become senile. When Gran dies, Allison learns that love between family members or close friends allows for letting go, accepting change, and continuing with life.

Alice Yazzie's Year by Ramona Maher (Coward, McCann, and Geoghegan, 1977). Twelve free-verse poems chronicle the events and feelings of Alice's eleventh year while living with her grandfather on a Navajo reservation.

Grandpa and Frank by Janet Majerus (J.P. Lippincott, 1976). Twelve-year-old Sarah helps her grandpa, who is becoming senile, keep his farm.

Cinnamon Cane by Melinda Pollowitz (Harper and Row, 1977). Twelve-year-old Cassie tries to prevent her grandfather from growing old and losing his independence.

Dear Greta Garbo by Toby Talbot (Putnam, 1978). Thirteen-year-old Miranda's grandfather dies, and the members of her family mourn his death in their different ways.

Grandpa—and Me by Stephanie Tolan (Scribner, 1978). Her grandfather's increasing senility brings eleven-year-old Kerry to a new understanding of both him and her own place in the family.

Getting Rid of Marjorie by Betty Wright (Holiday House, 1981). Eleven-year-old Emily invents a variety of schemes to get rid of her new step-grandmother since she poses a threat to Emily's close relationship to her grandfather.

References used to compile this list include: **Children's Books in Print** (Bowker); **Children's Catalog,** 14th ed. (Wilson, 1980, 1982); **The Bookfinder: A Guide to Children's Literature about the Needs and Problems of Youth Aged 2-15** (American Guidance Service, 1977); **Subject Guide to Books in Print** (Bowker, 1981, 1982).

Suggested Activities

1. Ask an older acquaintance or a grandparent of one of the students to read the book that students are reading and then to visit the class and join in a class discussion of the emotions and situations presented in the book.
2. Either before or after reading, invite an older person whom you know or a grandparent of one of the students to talk about how he or she feels about growing older. Ask this older person to explain feelings that are the same as those experienced when he or she was the same age as the students in the class, and feelings that are different. Allow students to ask questions about things they wonder about or worry about when they think of growing old.
3. Before reading one of the books that deals with a special problem faced by older people, form discussion groups and ask students to list and discuss some of the problems that they think they will face as they approach old age. After reading, ask students to form the same groups and to talk in more detail about the particular problem dealt with in the story.
4. After reading, divide the class into pairs of students and ask each pair to choose one of the dialogues in the book between the young person and the older person, to become familiar with the situation and emotions of the scene, and to act out the scene in their own words for the class.
5. Before reading, ask students to write a paragraph or two on how they think they will feel about themselves when they grow old. After reading, ask students if reading about the older person in the book changed their opinions at all and, if so, in what way.

6. Either before or after reading, invite a local physician to visit the class and talk about the process and effects of aging.

7. Before reading, brainstorm a list of specific problems that older people might have to face and then brainstorm a list of ways in which young people can help older people with these problems. After reading, ask students whether the main character helped the older person in the story. If so, how? If students think not, ask them if there might be some way that the main character could have helped. How?

8. After reading, discuss how the older character in the book spends most of his or her time. Ask students if they can imagine what this character might have done or been like twenty or thirty years previously. How would he or she have been different? Then invite several older people to visit the class and talk about ways they spend their time, what their hobbies are, and what the difference is between how they currently spend their time and how they spent it twenty or thirty years ago.

Films in the Classroom

To further help students develop a positive understanding of the elderly, consider the use of films as classroom resources. You may want to *preview* (for just the cost of the return postage), *rent,* or *purchase* award-winning films that deal with aging in our society. For information and to request a free film catalog, contact Learning Corporation of America at their toll-free number (1-800-323-6301) or, from Illinois, Alaska, or Hawaii, call collect: 1-312-940-1260.

Additional films are available from Coronet/MTI Films, distributors of Learning Corporation of America. For information and to request their free catalog, call their toll-free number (1-800-621-2131) or, from Illinois, Alaska, or Hawaii, call collect: 1-312-940-1260. (From these locations, the collect number is the same for the two companies.)

Maria Valeri-Gold, Marietta, Georgia